

REMARKS

Claims 1-18 are pending in this application, of which claims 1, 14 and 18 are independent and amended in this paper. Claims 19 and 20 are new with no new matter entered thereby.

Claims 1-4, 8-12, 14, 15 17 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) are being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 4,463,709 to Pluequet ("Pluequet"). The remaining claims have been rejected as being obvious over Pluequet or over Pluequet in view of U.S. Pat. 5,873,330 to Takahashi et al. ("Takahashi"). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections and request reconsideration in light of the above amendments to the claims and the following remarks.

To briefly summarize, Pluequet discloses an exhaust gas conduit system of simplified construction having a manifold with longitudinal water chambers formed by the walls of an insulating wall and ribs for support. Takahashi discloses a coolant system for a vertically oriented outboard engine, the cooling system includes a pressure regulator for preventing the coolant from exceeding a maximum pressure and a thermostat provided along the coolant path for control of the coolant flow.

Amended independent claims 1 recites an "exhaust manifold cooling jacket comprising a housing" including "a cavity sized to enclose an exhaust manifold of the engine and form an insulating space," "a coolant passage therein for receiving liquid coolant" and exhaust passage ... for conducting a flow of exhaust from the exhaust manifold through the housing" and "a catalytic conversion element disposed within the housing." Amended independent claim 14 recites a corresponding "method of altering a combustion engine to enhance exhaust gas cooling in a marine environment." Amended independent claim 18 recites *inter alia* "an exhaust manifold cooling jacket comprising a housing forming a cavity sized to enclose an exhaust manifold of a combustion engine" and "a catalytic conversion element disposed within the housing." The amendments are fully supported by the instant specification at, for example, page 6, lines 3-19 and FIG. 17.

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Serial No. : 09/862,973
Filed : May 22, 2001
Page : 7 of 7

Attorney's Docket No.: 00637-025001

Pluequet fails to disclose a catalytic conversion element disposed within the gas conduit as claimed in claims 1, 14 and 18, as amended. Accordingly, applicants respectfully submit that Pluequet is not anticipatory of claims 1-4, 8-12, 14, 15, 17 and 18.

With respect to the remaining claims rejected as obvious over Pluequet or over Pluequet in view of Takahashi, applicants submit that the catalytic conversion element disposed within the housing of the exhaust manifold cooling jacket recited in the amended claims represent a nonobvious improvement over the art. Inclusion of the catalytic conversion element in the manifold cooling jacket can lead to reduced operating temperatures of the catalyst, which can mitigate the catalyzing reaction of the combustible exhaust gases, ordinary an undesirable effect and thus, a nonobvious modification. Thus applicants respectfully submit that claims 5, 6, 7, 13 and 16 are not obvious over the of the applied references, alone or in combination.

Enclosed is a \$210 check for the Petition for Extension of Time fee. Please apply any other charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

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